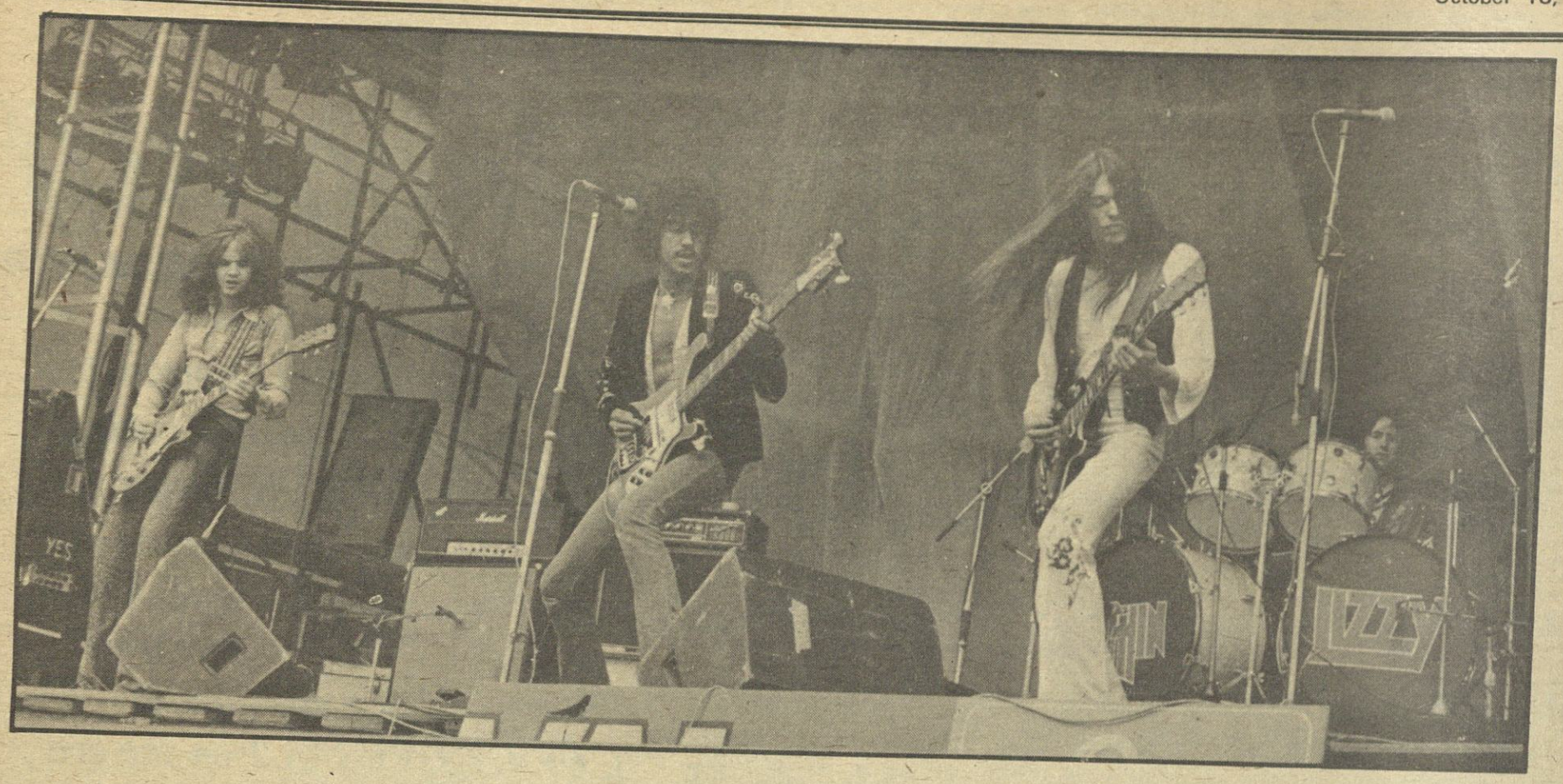

I take it serious wharrado, know wharramean?

*There was **THIN LIZZY**. They were in **GERMANY**. With them was **CHRIS SALEWICZ**. The rest you know*

IS IT ODD — or merely the ultimate surrealism of this efficient economic miracle — that members of a certain Very 'Eavy english Band (who play a quite passable "All Or Nothing") can be found backstage in the bicycle-watching pavilion letting German groupies scarf up fistfuls of their legal Mandies.

"It . . . errh . . . makes them randy," the lead vocalist suggests half-heartedly as he turns an already wall-banging young fraulein's brain into a mixture of marrowfat and mung.

Such is pleasure in the land of over-the-counter leapers and sleepers.

And what of Mama promoters who, at every gig they put on, are obliged to take the security out of the hands of the khaki-garbed kraut fuzz and to put it in the care of the Bones, the German Angels?

Christ, easy-going pleasant British Hell's Angels come close to giving me apoplexy. But Angels who communicate in German . . .!?! Bit heavy, man.

So Mama promoters just present these acres of psychedelic storm-troopers with free beer and a few human beings to roast in their own special enclosures and the official polizei back off.

Such delicious Animal Natural, no?

Ace, brought in on a morning flight to replace Supertramp at this festival, prove too mellow — pensive even — for the 25,000 wasted bodies out there to digest. They die. So does an Angel. At the side of the stage during "How Long" one of the Bones ODees, pukes up and has a heart attack.

His body is removed from the backstage area with a certain expediency.

"You're over here to preserve a way of life: Your own." It is probably doubtful that the third ex-GIs who make up the Bones' ranks pay too great heed to the American Forces Network radio station based just up the road in Frankfurt.

The Yanks in the audience, though? Well, theirs is quite another story. Their way of life is indeed being preserved. Right down to their imported Alfa Sweet Banana Skin skins. Get on that Frankfurt Special to Obliteration Row. Go, dune-buggy, go.

THIN LIZZY are big in Germany. Lizzy have cracked the Fatherland. Lizzy were, in fact, saved from extinction by the Fatherland.

Transformed yet again — after the departure of their second lead guitarist, Gary Moore — into possibly the first British bass and drums outfit since Jet Harris and Tony Meehan, Phil Lynott and Brian Downey brought in the axes from the remnants of heavy horrendoes Atomic Rooster and toured Germany at the beginning of last year.

The tour earned the rhythm playing duo enough money to hold auditions. Teethed on "Whisky In The Jar", a Decca Top Ten hit at the beginning of 1973, Lynott and Downey knew what not to do.

No more hit singles. No more ballroom tours for audiences expecting Thin Lizzy to come out and play a rock'n'roll workout of "Danny Boy". Thin Lizzy as a mean, stack-heeled, bloozy rock band that keeps splitting up, got itself 17-year-old Brian Robertson and Scott Gorham — an American over here playing with Slim Chance — in on twin lead guitars.

'They left Decca, signed with Vertigo in the summer of 1974, and got "Night Life", their first Vertigo album, into the outer edges of the US album charts.

And started selling out at club and college dates in the UK once again. And put much time into the making of "Fighting", their new Vertigo album.

Back in the car, Lynott's pants firmly tethered, we're talking about the problems of being Thin. A suggestion has been put forward that possibly these former troubles could be linked with a certain mental *rawness* on the collective part of the original members.

"*Jeeeeee-zuz*. See this," says Lynott as he pulls up the sleeve of his right arm. "Me skin wasn't brown — it was green."

Lynott is not just Irish. Lynott is an Irish half-caste — "Just imagine it: I get both Irish and Nigger jokes" — though the voice has more of the intonations of a Scouse 'Comedian'.

Try out this lesson in jive blarney: "You know, like me and Brian came down to London and we hit the Underground . . . We met this Irish fella at Euston Station and 'e took us and we got smashed. And we thought 'e was gonna rip us off, you know? And I was getting really paranoid and saying 'Let's get out of 'ere'. So we split — and it was the first time in London. And like, you know, into this guy's house. Get stoned. And we said 'Let's get the Underground', you know?

"So we were standing there at the tube station — and this'll tell you how green we were — and we see the tube coming and we say 'This is ours'. And we stuck out our hands. Stop, you know. HARGH-HARGH-HARGH-HARGH!! The thing nearly took 'alf our arms off.

"Knowharramean?

"That's how fookin' Irish we were."

Such earthiness, huh?

But come, chaps. Surely there must have been just the odd moment when yet another guitarist would jack it in and you might think "Why Me?". Or even question if it Was All Worth It? Surely just now and then you must have been a little down.

LYNOTT: Why not?

"Well, wouldn't you? Two changes of line-up in one year . . .

"But anyway de "Vagabonds" (here Lynott is referring to "Vagabonds Of The Western World", Lizzy's third and last Decca album)" went into the charts in the States and we got a bit of readies in and we were able to carry on.

"That was it. So finally we got up again, you know.

"And this to me proves the power of the band if nothing else: that three times we set out to do it and this time we're really gonna do it because we've got a line-up now that's stable. We've been together a year. And we're ready to crack it."

A touch more solemnly: "I've never worked in me life. I've always made me living with . . ."

Spiel?

"Yeah. 'Ard neck. Really, you know?" he splutters with strange giggles.

Scott Gorham slumps in the back seat of the car. He says little. "Pull my finger?" he asks his bass-player. Lynott obliges. Gorham shifts his position slightly. There is now an aroma of undigested schnitzel in the car.

"Tomorrow," Lynott carries on, "Tomorrow I know I can go out and do this, this and this. Wear this, this and this. Pull these strokes.

"And we can break.

"But whether I want to be famous in that way is another thing.

"When I first started I was like . . . I believed that if these guys woe denims and striped T-shirts like Peter Green they were like paupers and really playin' the blues and feeling everything they played.

"And then I came to England and watched guys get out of suits to get into denims and go on stage.

"I thought 'What's going on here?' You know? (pauses and laughs) . . . I watched really nice guys with great attitudes take off their jeans and stop smoking their dope and get into the biggest fookin' pop outfit you've ever seen.

"You knowharramean? I'd seen complete reversals.

"So I just levelled out and I said 'Well, I don't wanna be like phoney' and I don't wanna be like . . . *flash* . . . just to make money.

"So somewhere in there . . . I've got an ego," he free-associates, "I don't jump up in front of 20,000 people and not have ego. You know. I think I'm great. Knowharramean? . . . But I levelled out. I don't wanna be famous just for the sake of being famous. I like to please people as well, you know?

"The Brinsleys, like, were a nice band. But they tried so hard to underplay it, you know, that in the end they killed themselves. They made themselves into a pub band, you know?"

The essential cream-your-knickers ingredient in a good stage show is mentioned.

"I came up on bands like The Small Faces, The Yardbirds, the Stones, The Kinks," notes Lynott.

"Spare me the bands who just stand there all night," adds Gorham in a rare moment of decisive speech.

It is perhaps apposite that at this exact moment we hear "Ladies and gentlemen: Status Quo". "'Ow are you?" screams Francie. And into that shuffle-boogie rhythm. They do not stand there all night. They go down very well indeed. It is necessary to close the car roof to continue the conversation.

"Sly is me man," continues Lynott. "People say Hendrix . . . I love Hendrix as a guitar player but Sly to me has more finesse. I liked (One notes that Lynott speaks of Sly in the past tense) his whole style. Sly was *there*. He was *hip*. He was *cool*. The way he could come up with a very simple line like, *"Thank you falettinme be mice elf agin". Wharrafookah!* Sly had class, man."

Soul brothers, ehh?

"Well, cos I'm Irish I only heard of the black problem when I looked at the size of me mickey . . . No, in Ireland they don't realise that the immigration laws are stricter than they are in England, knowharramean? I've watched people in Ireland saying, 'That's terribe: the way the English are turning the black people away'.

"But I regard meself as 'alf-caste, really. Me mother's white. Me father's black. So I regard meself as half-caste. I relate to them people. I relate to the Chinese man that has a Scottish accent, the dago.

"The half-caste is gonna take over in the end, knowharramean? It's got to. I mean you're half-fookin'-Polack, I'm half-Irish Brazilian; 'e'll fookin' tell ya (pointing at Gorham) . . . 'E says 'e's American. 'E's got Irish relations."

Back to rock music's more relevant essentials, however: "The nice thing is since we've had the change in line-up . . . As you can see (pointing at Gorham) he's a good looker and Brian is young and he's a good looker too. And a lot of the chicks . . . we have a *great* time," Lynott splutters lasciviously, "We're very popular with the girls. Really. 'Cos he speaks with the American accent and I give them the Irish blarney. And when we went to America it was us that had the different accent and 'e was just another long-haired Californian."

Heavy pulling, ehh?

Lynott foams at the mouth: "Ye-*ahhh*. All you had to say was 'London. Carnaby Street' . . . And you were *in*.

For some reason we all begin to feel hungry.